Tourism, Culture and Recreation
Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs

March 26, 2008

Federal-Provincial Bilateral Agreement to Increase Sport Participation in Newfoundland and Labrador

The Honourable Helena Guergis, Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport), and the Honourable Patty Pottle, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs in Newfoundland and Labrador, have announced the signature of a bilateral agreement that reaffirmed Canada's and the province's support for increasing sport participation and enhancing opportunities for Aboriginal people's participation in sport.

The agreement brings the total Government of Canada contribution to sport participation in Newfoundland and Labrador to $833,000 over the next three years. An existing contribution of $653,000 supports sport participation, while an additional contribution of $180,000 – along with matching funds from Newfoundland and Labrador – will support Aboriginal sport in the province.

"These bilateral agreements will help increase sport participation in the province," said Secretary of State Guergis. "They will support initiatives that encourage children, young people, and Aboriginal people in Newfoundland and Labrador to increase their participation in sport and lead more active lives."

"As someone who's been involved in youth sport as a player, coach and volunteer, I know how important these types of sports programs are and how significant an opportunity it is for a child to be involved in organized activity," added the Honourable Loyola Hearn, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Member of Parliament (St. John's South–Mount Pearl). "I'm glad our government can play a role and support communities in their efforts to involve children in sport."

"The joint funding provided under the latest agreement will help hire appropriate personnel to manage recreation and sport projects and implement player, official and coaching clinics for Aboriginal youth," said the Honourable Clyde Jackman, Newfoundland and Labrador Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. "Most importantly, it is designed to encourage greater youth and Aboriginal community involvement in recreation and sport activities, which we expect will lead to stronger, healthier individuals and communities."

Minister Pottle said sports and recreation activities encourage the pursuit of excellence while promoting healthy and active living among Aboriginal peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador.

"This funding will help us to advance the health and well-being of Aboriginal peoples, which is a clear direction contained in our provincial Northern Strategic Plan," added Minister Pottle.

The funding will assist the provincial government in delivering projects that include community sport, young people, and coaching development.

The Government of Canada is the single largest investor in Canada's sport system. The Government of Canada's investment in the Canadian sport system will grow to an all-time high of over $164 million annually, once the commitment to sport excellence, in Budget 2008, is fully implemented. This provides funding for initiatives to support our high-performance athletes and to promote sport participation among all Canadians.

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Media contacts:

Blair MacLean

Director of Communications and Parliamentary Affairs
Office of the Honourable

Helena Guergis, P.C., M.P.

Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport)
613 995-1293

Donald Boulanger

A/Chief,
Media Relations
Canadian Heritage
819 994-9101

Heather May

Director of Communications
Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
709-729-0928, 697-5061
heathermay@gov.nl.ca

John Tompkins

Director of Communications
Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
709-729-1674, 728-7762
jtompkins@gov.nl.ca

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